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DPS-4898 ✓

24 October 1958

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Development and Procurement, DPS/DCI
Director of Administration, DPS/DCI
Director of Operations, DPS/DCI
Director of Materiel, DPS/DCI

SUBJECT : Responsibilities for Research, Development, and
Test Activities

1. A variety of circumstances, notably the welcome arrival at Headquarters of additional technically competent personnel and the rotation of all our senior personnel at Edwards AFB have somewhat unsettled previously prevailing habits and procedures with respect to development and test programs. Although it is still uncertain whether we will be initiating a major new program, I believe it will be useful to clarify informally the distribution of responsibilities in this area of work within the DPS organization. The primary responsibility for all new development work (except as specifically arranged to the contrary) rests, of course, with [] as Director of Development and Procurement. Within his element of the DPS I hope that [] can concentrate on technical matters and can hold to a minimum the diversion of his time to such managerial tasks as negotiation and expediting. [] will of course be assisted by [] in their several fields.

2. The management of test programs presents a minor problem of organization. Testing is a phase of development. It is an activity conducted largely by company personnel whose technical work in the developmental test phase of a program is controlled and directed by their parent company rather than by Commanders responsible to this Headquarters. In these respects test activities are similar to development work carried on within company plants. On the other hand, flight testing involves aircraft operations and flight test programs both affect and are affected by aircraft assignment. Accordingly, there is an operational aspect at least to all flight testing.

3. This dual aspect of flight test activities is largely (though not wholly) responsible for another organizational problem--that of the relationship between [] on the one hand and our

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25X1 contractors on the other. It is not feasible for our representatives at Edwards [] to exercise any close supervision over development work contractors are doing in their own plants. Hence in this phase of any given development, contractors deal directly with this Headquarters. This habit tends to carry over when they are conducting flight tests. Thus it has frequently happened that our senior representatives at the test site have not even been fully informed of decisions made with respect to flight test activities and communicated to contractor personnel at the test site by way of the home offices of their companies. Aside from the altogether natural frustration this situation engenders, it has the effect of depriving our representatives at the test site of authority and makes it difficult for them to perform any useful service in the monitoring of test programs on our behalf (in this Headquarters the writer has been the principal sinner in this respect; his finger is pointed at no one else).

25X1 4. One word should be said about the duties of the Project representatives [] at Edwards on the one hand and the contractors (especially Kelly Johnson) on the other hand. Our philosophy from the inception of CHALICE has been one of placing major responsibility on the contractors and reducing to a minimum any detailed technical review of their development work and any second guessing of their technical decisions. We have expected them to consult us with respect to major technical questions but we have relied on their judgment with respect to many important matters which the Military procurement services would insist on approving. Nevertheless, it is wholly consistent with this philosophy (which has served us well) that we should keep ourselves closely informed of the progress of programs and should exercise certain systems responsibilities with respect to them. We can monitor and coordinate developments in progress in contractors' plants through fairly frequent visits to their plants and periodic suppliers meetings if justified. For the most part, monitoring in this fashion has to be done by Headquarters personnel. On the other hand, flight test programs can and should be monitored by our representatives at the test site. I suggest that this monitoring should consist of the performance of at least three functions. The first is progress reporting, which in my view should involve some evaluation of future prospects, diagnosis of difficulties and recommendations for action as appropriate. The second is expediting to the extent that this can better be done from the test site than from our Headquarters. The third is to act on behalf of this Headquarters in making or communicating those decisions which we must make in the discharge of our systems responsibility. For the most part these are apt to be decisions on the relative priorities of different test activities. In considerable measure, too, our representatives must perform locally in a multitude of small matters the function which is so large a part of [] job of inducing contractors to work

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together effectively. I am well aware that efforts of our representatives to perform these functions will not be altogether pleasing to the Lockheed people and Kelly Johnson will argue that this constitutes the kind of interference with him that will slow down any new program. If, however, our representatives are reasonably skillful I am unimpressed with this argument. The major contractor has no grounds for resenting a competent observer and should not be permitted to become the dictator of activities that involve a number of other contractors who also have difficult tasks to perform.

5. These reflections on the relationships between the various people involved in development and flight testing lead me to the following tentative conclusions about our own organization:

a. Our organization at Edwards has an important function to perform with respect to flight test programs and should be encouraged and supported in its performance. Within that organization, as in our Headquarters, an officer should be designated as having primary responsibility for all developmental activities. Presumably he should be [redacted] He should be aware that he has responsibilities parallel to those of the Director of D&P in Headquarters and there should be frequent and close contact between them. [redacted] should be in direct contact with all contractors participating in flight test programs. All of us in our contacts with contractors should make clear that he has a delegation of authority to act for us in the performance of the tasks discussed above.

b. At Headquarters the primary responsibility for initiating development and flight test programs should rest with the Director of D&P. Suggestions or requirements for specific developments should be presented to and discussed with him. Subject to my authority and Colonel Burke's the Director of D&P should determine the relative priorities of the several test programs and should approve financial support for them.

c. Both at Edwards and at Headquarters, Operations retains primary responsibility for the operational aspects of test programs. Concretely this should probably mean at Edwards that [redacted] [redacted] as Base Commander or his Operations Officer rather

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25X1 than [] should concern himself with the daily scheduling of aircraft activities. In Headquarters the Director of D&P should depend on the Director of Operations to handle such operational matters concerning flight test activities as the suppression of radar, assignment of aircraft, and provision of support by most Military organizations (other than the R&D organizations in the Washington area.) In the performance of these functions Operations is helping with the carrying through of one phase of development programs initiated by the Director of D&P and all of the Director of Operations' activities in this area should therefore be closely coordinated with the Director of D&P.

d. Notwithstanding the foregoing, certain specific development programs can more conveniently be performed by Operations than by the Director of D&P, notably monitoring of personal equipment performance and modifications and the arranging of test of interception capabilities against the [] Operations should, however, keep the Director of D&P advised of such specialized development work.

(sgd) Richard M. Bissell, Jr.

RICHARD M. BISSELL, JR.
Special Assistant to the Director
for Planning and Development

SA/PD/DCI:RMB:djm

Addressees - 1 cy each

1-Dep Dir DPS/DCI

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~~1-Security Officer & Communications Officer~~

1-SA/PD/DCI Chrono

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Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Director of D&P, DPS/DCI
Director of Administration, DPS/DCI
Director of Operations, DPS/DCI
FROM : Director of Materiel, DPS/DCI

DATE: 24 October 1958

SUBJECT: Responsibilities for Research, Development, and Test Activities

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Herewith is an informal paper on which I would like your comments in due time. I feel that we should in the near future discuss this subject with

I would like to meet in a few days with the addressees and decide what amendments or additions this should have and whether it should be further formalized in tone so that it can be used for the guidance of all concerned here and at Edwards.

(Meeting set for 2:30 Friday 31 October)

cc: Dep Dir, DPS/DCI

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